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A
BROCHURE
OF
VERSE



BY
RALPH S. WOODWORTH

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OF

VERSE



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RALPH S. WOODWORTH

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PRELUDE

If a perusal of these poems serve to entertain, to inspire,
to uplift or to beguile you for a time from the cares of a
busy life, the author will be content.

R. S. W.



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Elkhart, Indiana

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GOD'S BENEDICTION HOUR

Blest twilight time, dear evening hour,
When all the earth is hushed to rest,
When wearied child and drooping flower
Ailke recline on parent breast.
Blest eventide, 'tis then we know
That Christ is near to lift us higher,
And make our souls to feel the glow
Of true religions holy fire.

The morning sun is pure and bright
With scented air from sun-kissed hill.
The noontide bursts with dazzling light
O'er wooded slope and rippling rill;
But when the evening shadows fall,
We feel God's presence everywhere,
'Tis then we hear the Savior's call,
'Tis then we bow in earnest prayer.

Majestic hour of all the day,
When nature's voices whisper low,
When angels sing and mortals pray
To Him who all our grief doth known.
Then may we lift our hearts to Thee,
Then may we feel Thy wondrous power,
Then may we all from sin be free,
At this, Thy benediction hour.

CONTENT

We may travel o'er mountain and meadow,
We may journey through valley and dell,
We may ride on the waves of the ocean,
And hear the sweet story they tell.
But unless we bear burdens for others
And lift up the heads that are bent,
We never can hope to discover
The greatest of treasure, content.

We may dwell in a palace of splendor,
We may juggle with nuggets of gold,
But unless we are loving and tender
Our hearts will be heavy and cold.
Help others, the way will grow brighter,
The way that the Nazarene went
And, lo! our own loads will be lighter
And we'll find that great treasure, content.



CAN ANY ONE DOUBT OUR GOD?

Can any one look at the morning sun
As it lightens the purpling east,
With its majesty surpassing far
Any monarch arrayed for a feast,
Or watching at night as it sinks to rest
In the beautiful western sky,
Have a doubt that God in His power and might
Is reigning supremely on high?

Can any one look at a pansy or rose,
Or the tint of a butterfly's wing,
And think that aught but a power divine,
Could form such an exquisite thing?
Can any one look on this glorious world,
Or the azure sky above,
And doubt the Creator of heaven and earth
And His infinite wealth of love?



AN OUTDOOR DREAM

Just a little cottage with the roses climbing 'round
And the morning glories hanging from the eaves,
Daises and the clover blossoms springing from the ground
Midst the music of the rustling lilac leaves ;
The rippling of a brooklet flowing noisily along
Close bordering a tiny garden spot,
With every breath a ablessing and life and endless song
And trouble, care and worry all forgot.

With mild-eyed cattle grazing in the meadow near at hand.
And the quail a calling "Bob-White" t oher mate,
With Dick, my faithful pointer, to come at my command
And chanticleer perched on the garden gate,
The blue smoke slowly curling from my pipe of peace serene,
Its fragrance filtering through the falling dew,
But one thing more is needful to complete the happy scene
And that, you've surely guessed, sweetheart, is you.



WHEN BILLY AND I GO FISHING

The blackbird calls from the willow tree,
The bees are a humming drowsily,
And Bill squints his eye as he says to me,
"Let's you and I go fishing."

Then I look up at the blue in the sky
And think of the meadows green near by
And say as I glance with anxious eye,
"All right, we'll go a-fishing."

And Bill, he acts like a circus clown
As we turn our backs on the busy town
And size up the beauty of nature's gown
On our way to the lake a-fishing.

But as like as not the fish won't bite
And Bill will say that "the wind ain't right,"
But that won't lessen his appetite
When Billy and I go fishing.

Ah! a day like this has a value rare
And I can't learn a lesson anywhere
That to my mind will quite compare
With a trip to the lake a-fishing.

And whether its August or gentle June
The shadows of night come all too soon,
But nature has put us back in tune
For Billy and I've been fishing.



LINES ON LINCOLN

Steadfast, serene, alone he stood
In time of greatest stress.
The while his heart poured forth a flood
Of love and tenderness.

No wonder 'tis, nor mystery
That martyred he should be,
No character in history
So like the Christ as he.



WASHINGTON

Patient and loyal. true and kind,
With tenderness and strenth combined,
A noble man of master mind
Was Washington.

His honored name will ever be
The dearest word in history;
And all revere the memory
Of Washington.

And so today we celebrate
The birth of one both good and great,
Whose courage changed a nation's fate,
George Washington.



A CHRISTMAS CAROL

Thou God above, in realms above,
In whom we live and breathe and move,
Accept our humble thanks, we pray,
On this our Savior's natal day.
For peace and plenty, health and cheer,
And all the blessings of the year.

And as we celebrate the birth
Of Thy dear Son, who blessed the earth
With love and gladness long ago,
So may we live and learn and know
The greatest lesson in life's school,
As taught by Him, the golden rule.



A CHRISTMAS SONG

In the midst of this season of gladness
When the bells ring a musical chime,
There are those bearing burdens of sadness
Whose lips are lilting a rhyme.

Some mother is heartsick and lonely,
Some father is silent and sad,
Some drink of the bitter cup only,
Not all can be cheery and glad.

But whether in pain or in pleasure,
We honor the birth of our Lord,
We all may receive a full measure
Of help and of strength from His word.
And lifting alike our petitions
To Him who can still the rough sea,
Serenely we'll meet life's conditions
As Christ did on blue Galilee.



EASTER SONG

All hail! al l hail!! to the risen King,
To the man of Galilee.
Let the praise of every nation ring
Triumphant o'er land and sea,
For the power of Christ is the same today
As it was when the stone was rolled away.

Let us not forget, in this world of stress,
To follow our King's command,
"Every knee shall bow and each tongue confes.
It is easy to understand.
For the gospel of Christ is the same today
As it was when the stone was rolled away.

Then down the ages and through the gloom
Of darkness that sin has made,
The same sweet voice from the Savior's tomb
Says, "'Tis I, be not afraid,"
For the love of Christ is the same today
As it was when the stone was rolled away.

AN EASTER ODE

Easter time comes to remind us
Christ is our risen King.
Joyous today may He find us
Ready His praise to sing.
Banish all sorrow and sadness,
Bare is the riven tomb,
Nothing but glory and gladness,
Never a thought of gloom.

Lovingly He watches o'er us,
We are His children all.
Bright is the pathway before us
We shall not faint or fall.
He is our Savior forever,
Soon shall we see His face.
We shall abide with Him ever,
Saved by His wondrous grace.



A PRAYER

When'er my heart is bowed with grief,
When'er the world seems dark and drear,
When'er oppressed by unbelief,
Come Thou, O Christ, and linger near.

Let me but hear Thy voice divine.
Let me but know that Thou are near,
Let me but feel Thy hand in mine,
'Twill drive away all doubt and fear.

In clouds and sunshine be my guide,
In joy and sadness be my friend ;
Walk all through life close by my side,
Be mine, dear Lord, unto the end.



BE KIND

Just to be always kind, my friend,
Is such an easy thing to do,
But when the day is at an end
And with its duties we are through,
Our souls are chastened and refined
If we have been sincerely kind.

For kindness is the child of love,
And where love has a dwelling place,
The light that shineth from above
Illuminates both soul and face,
And sweet contentment we shall find
If we will be sincerely kind.



A MEMORY

So near, so near, He seemed to be
That sweetest peace came unto me.

My listening ear

Could almost hear

Him saying, child there's naught to fear,
And there was not, with Christ so near.

So near, so near, He seemed to be.
That His dear self my soul could see.

His radiant face

Made that drear place

As bright as heavenly places be;
Gloom changed to glory there for me.

So near, so near, He seemed to be.
That I was lost in ecstasy.

I longed to go

And told Him so

But hearkened when He whispered, No,
Your work's unfinished here below.

And so I asked for strength and grace,
For every time and every place,

To do my best;

And leave the rest

With Him, and may I never stray
From my dear Savior's side away.

LET ME IN THY PRESENCE BE

Savior when this life is o'er,
When my soul from earth is free,
When I reach the heavenly shore,
Let me in Thy presence be.

When I cross death's narrow stream
Let me not lose sight of Thee,
Gently, kindly, on me beam,
Let me in Thy presence be.

In Thy glorious courts above
I will learn Thy praise to tell,
In the radiance of Thy love,
With the blest forever dwell.

Hear me, Lord, as I shall pray
Softly now on bended knee,
In that grand eteranl day
Let me in Thy presence be.





LINCOLN

When Lincoln spoke
The nation held a listening ear,
Proud freedom woke
And cruel slavery quaked with fear.

When Lincoln died
The stricken nation wept and grieved
'Till freedom cried,
He waits above; his task achieved.



LIFE

O, Life is a joyous thing
And we toss our hand at fate,
For life is to laugh and sing
When the heart has found its mate.

The days like a dream drift by,
And pleasant the way and straight
And cloudless and bright our sky
When the heart hath found its mate.

But life is a dreary thing,
And weeping we watch and wait
For the peace that death shall bring,
When the heart hath lost its mate.



A FANCY

My love is a fairy, as light and as airy,
As ever the down on a thistle could be,
Some day I will marry this beautiful fairy
And take her away o'er the fathomless sea.
We'll dwell in the heather, be happy together,
And nothing will trouble us all the day long.
We'll gather sweet flowers until the night hours
Then be lulled to sleep by the nightingale's s. ng.

No evil shall harm us and naught can alarm us,
For we'll be as pure as the dewdrops at dawn.
The birds will all love us, the bright stars above us
Will watch o'er our sleep till night's curtains are drawn.
When life's hours are ending, the angels descending,
Will bear us away to our home in the sky,
Where nothing will ever occur to discover
The love of my beautiful fairy and I.



A SUPPLICATION

Search me Lord and know my heart,
Try me all my thoughts to know,
When from right I would depart,
Lead as Thous wouldst have me go.

Thou has laid Thine hand on me
Compassing my path about,
Whither, Master, shall I flee
That Thou canst not find me out.

Yea, the darkness hideth not
From Thine eye, and like the day
Shines the night around the spot
Where, in shame, I turn away.

If I take the morning's wings
O'er the boundless sea to dwell,
Lo, Thy hand in mercy clings,
Thou shalt guide me there as well.

When in secret I was made
All imperfect, Thou didst see,
Let me then be not afraid,
Draw me nearer, Lord, to Thee.

Search me, Lord, and know my heart
Try me all my thoughts to know,
When from right I would depart;
Lead as Thous wouldst have me go.

ARE WE DOING THE BEST WE CAN?

Are we doing the best we can today,
The best we know how to do?
It's one thing you know to preach and pray
And another to carry it through.
And I wonder if we can truly say
We are doing the best we can today.

Are we doing the best we can today,
The very best we can do?
The time is short that we have to stay,
And it's best to be brave and true,
And a glorious thing indeed to say
We are doing the best we can today.

Are we doing the best we can today
Regardless of lodge or creed?
Are we always able to keep away
From graft and grab and greed?
Oh! happy the man who can always say,
I am doing the best I can today.

Are we doing the best we can today,
Or do we quibble and twist
For the coin, in every possible way
To hold in our puny fist?
Oh! let's turn about and be able to say
We are doing the best we can today.

WHEN CONSISTENCY PREVAILS.

I wonder when the time will ever be
When Capital and Labor can agree;
When the men whom we elect
Will continue to respect
The pledges that they made so earnestly.

I wonder when the time will ever be
When the Preachers can forget their salary
For just a little while,
And emulate the style
Of Him they represent so fervently.

I wonder when the time will ever be
When all of us our duty plainly see
To weed our hearts of greed
And help the ones in need.
God speed the time when all these things shall be.



THE GUIDING STAR.

When Christ was born
That gladsome morn
Two thousand years ago,
 A star of love
 Shone from above
His resting place to show.

And wise men came
With hearts aflame
To worship and adore.
 And shepherds meek
 Their Lord did seek
And spread the tidings o'er.

O' Eastern Star
In skies afar
Shine ever clear and bright,
 Shine now as then
 When other men
Were guided by thy light.

Lead us each day
From sin away
We fix our hearts on thee
 O! Lead us straight
 Through heaven's gate
To dwell eternally.



A CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

Teach us, O Christ to understand
How we should worship Thee today.
For blessings from Thy bounteous hand
May we be grateful, Lord we pray.
But most of all, for Thy redeeming power
May we be thankful every day and hour.

To earthly friends we freely give
The gifts that they most dearly prize.
Help us, O Christ, for Thee to live
And make some daily sacrifice.
For when life's little race so swiftly run
Is o'er, Eternity is just begun.



EASTER THOUGHTS.

What does Easter time mean to me, and what does it
mean to you?

Does it mean a display of grand array without an emotion
true?

Or do we behold in the sunset's gold, the touch of the
Master's hand?

Does the blue above but reflect His love over the sun-
kissed land?

Do the echoing voices of long ago repeat the sweet story
old

Of a risen Christ and an empty tomb from which the
stone was rolled?

Do we list to the Christ as He speaks today, or do we pass
Him by

And hasten along with the careless throng? How is it
with you and I?

Oh! our hearts should thrill at each song bird's trill, and
the music of stream and wood

Should vibrate fine with the voice divine and the world
seem wondrous good;

For we are His children and He our King and tenderly
from above

He reaches a merciful hand to us—for God, our God,
is love.

AN EASTER HYMN.

We may not see His pierced hands
Nor look into His face,
But we can feel His cleansing power
And know His saving grace.

We may not see the empty tomb
From which the stone was rolled,
But we can claim His Promises,
The sweetest ever told.

And though temptations come to us,
And though at times we fall
We find, if we are penitent
Forgiveness for all.

Then let us not forget to love,
To honor and obey
The Christ who died and rose again
On that triumphant day.



THE STREET FIDDLER.

He leaned half wearily against the post
That stood like sentinel at corner of the street;
His sightless eyes saw not the passing host,
His ears were heedless of the rushing feet.
But Oh! the music he could bring
From out each silent slumbering string.

His violin caressingly, he held
Beneath his chin, against the sunken breast,
And fast or slow the magic bow propelled
By slender fingers moving swift and deft,
And melody seductive, sweet,
Poured out upon the busy street.

His sallow face pathetically upturned
Betrayed the sadness of his lonely heart;
The fire of genius that so brightly burned,
Seemed phantom-like, and from himself apart,
Yet, Oh! the sweetness he could bring
From out each trembling tuneful string.



WHEN SORROW MAKES US KIN.

There's a fact that's worth observing along life's rugged
way,

It gives us faith and courage and helps us every day ;
It's the love that's lying latent, the spark divine within,
And we reach a common level when sorrow makes us kin.

When multitudes are stricken with famine, flood or fire,
The world responds as quickly as the word comes off the
wire,

And when accident or sickness lays any of us low,
The burden of't is lightened by affection's tender glow.

For sorrow draws us nearer upto God as well as man,
It's visitation teaches us to live the best we can ;
And sordid self is lifted and we feel the God within,
And equality is recognized when sorrow makes us kin.



IT MAY BE.

It may be when the mists shall clear
So that our vision sweeps the skies,
That every lingering doubt and fear
Will melt away before our eyes,
And that His spirit like a dove
Will wing its way to our retreat,
And lead us by the cord of love
In safety to our Master's feet.

It may be in that blissful day
When we our Savior's face behold,
When earthly cares have passed away
And life's short story has been told,
That He will take us by the hand
And, basking in that smile benign,
We'll somehow learn and understand
The boundless depths of love divine.



THE GOLDEN AGE THAT IS TO BE.

O- Golden Age that is to be,
When naught but good we all shall see.
When greed and vice shall pass away
And love and justice rule the day,
When all the world from sin is free
In that glad time that is to be.

When with each day's descending sun,
We count some righteous victory won,
And when each dawn that glints the sky,
Shines His approval from on high.
When peace joins hands with purity,
In that blest age that is to be.

O! Golden age that is to be,
Why movest thou so tardily?
Why need the world so long endure
The ills that love alone can cure?
Come reign in sweet tranquillity
Ye golden age that is to be.



THY CREED OF LOVE.

Dear God, help me to live each day,
Free from all selfishness and wrong;
Give me the grace to tread alway
The path of peace, and cheer and song;
And this my prayer to Thee above,
Teach me Thy creed of love.

May it be said, when I depart
This life for that mysterious shore,
His was a tender loving heart,
Dear Lord, I ask for nothing more.
So, looking from Thy courts above,
Teach me Thy creed of love.

What good can I accomplish here
If I defraud, if I oppress;
If in my heart I have not cheer
And sympathy and tenderness?
And so I pray to heaven above,
Bestow Thy creed of love.



HEAVEN AND EARTH REPOICE.

Merry, Merry Christmas!
Let the bells ring loud and clear.

Merry, Merry Christmas.
Dearest day of all the year,
And all the little girls and boys
With dancing eyes and childish toys
With make the whole world brighter
With their happiness and cheer.

Merry, Merry Christmas!
'Tis a day we all should love.

Merry, Merry Christmas,
Echo from the courts above,
And from the great angelic throng
In fancy, we can hear the song,
That Christ is glad in glory
Same as we are happy here.



A CHRISTMAS SUGGESTION.

As we shall celebrate the birth
Of Christ, the King of heaven and earth,
So also may we do aright
The things most pleasing in His sight.

And, if we cannot heal the blind
We can, at least like Him, be kind;
For kindness heals the broken heart,
And that alone may be our part.

And if we cannot scatter bread
To multitudes, we can instead
Do something in a humble way
To honor Christ this Christmas Day.



OUR RICHEST GIFT.

When we receive
On Christmas eve
The gifts from those we love,
May we not let
Ourselves forget
The Christ who reigns above.

Whose humble birth
Upon this earth
Meant peace for me and you
If we obey
And walk the way
That he ordains us to.

Then let us live
To love and give,
Our hearts devoid of guile
For, after all
When God doth call
There's nothing else worth while.



THE WORLD WITHIN.

The world grows better every day
Is what the optimist will say;
And smile as he is passing by
With cheery word and sparkling eye.

The world grows worse, some men will say
And, frowning darkly, sulk away
And leave us in a doubting plight
To figure out which one is right.

Suppose we turn and look within
And if we find remorse and sin,
We'll join the pessimistic man
And find just all the fault we can.

But if the introspective view
Reveals a heart that's pure and true
Then we can truly feel and say,
The world grows better every day.



IN THE VALLEY OF THE OLD ST. JOE.

There's a clear winding stream
Fringed with willows bending low,
And its waters agleam,
Make sweet music as they flow,
Where my life from care was free,
Where the birds sang just for me,
In the valley of the old St. Joe.

Take me back just tonight
Where the St. Joe River flows,
Where the moon shines so bright
And the honey-suckle grows,
For I long once more to be
'Neath the bending willow tree
In the valley of the old St. Joe.

Roll along—roll along
Dear old stream as you have done;
Sing the same cheery song
'Till life's race at last is run
Then, forever may I rest
In the vale I love the best
In the valley of the old St. Joe.

OCTOBER.

Hail grandest month of all the year
There's tonic in your atmosphere,
And I am glad that you are here,
Delightful old October.

Your sunset skies in colors rare
complete a picture wondrous fair,
And beauty greets us everywhere,
In splendid old October.

The forest trees in gorgeous dress
Resplendent in their loveliness
All blushingly their love confess
To you, my dear October.

Your captivating, wininng way
Has made me wish that you would stay,
And I'll be sad when you're away,
Majestic old October.



WHY FEAR?

I'm here
And while I stay
My part I'll play
As best I can
For 'tis God's plan.
Why fear?

I'm here
As He ordained.
If heaven's gained
I'll see His face,
O, wondrous grace;
Why fear?

I'm here
At His behest,
And with the blest
I shall abide
At His dear side;
Why fear?



A DESIRE.

Could I but live one day as Thou didst live
No selfish motive hold, nor idle thought
Thinking, believing, acting as I ought,
All earthly hopes and treasures would I give
Could I but live, O Christ, as Thou didst live.





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